

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 IO-13 /083 W
-----061052Z 081331 /11

R 060828Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8846
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 0498

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, IS, JO, PLO, KU, UAE, SA
SUBJ: OIL STATES AID TO WEST BANK MUNICIPALITIES.

1. SUMMARY: WEST BANK MAYORS' EFFORTS TO TAP OIL STATES FOR
DEVELOPMENT AID HAVE MET WITH INITIAL, SIGNIFICANT SUCCESS.
MOREOVER, AID MAY BE INSTITUTIONALIZED IN SISTER-CITY RELATIONS.
A NEW "HA-" IS IN THE OFFING. END SUMMARY.

2. BETHLEHEM MAYOR ELIAS FREIJ HAS CONFIRMED NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT
THAT JERICHO'S MUNICIPALITY HAS RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL FUNDS FROM
GOVERNMENT AS ASH SHARIQAH IN THE UAE. THE FUNDS, (ESTIMATED
BETWEEN \$225,000 AND \$300,000) WERE BROUGHT BY JERICHO'S MAYOR
ABD-AL'AZIZ SUWITI ACROSS THE ALLENBY BRIDGE IN THE FORM OF
JORDANIAN DINARS DURING THE LAST WEEK OF MARCH. ACCORDING
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TO THE JERUSALEM DAILY AL FAJR, A SEPARATE GRANT OF ABOUT
\$15,000 WILL BE FORTHCOMING FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF RA'S AL
KHAYMAH AND THAT MUNICIPAL PORJECTS FOR JERICHO WILL BE INCLUDED
IN ASH SHARIQAH'S BUDGET IN THE COMING YEARS.

3. THE MAYORS OF THE WEST BANK'S LARGEST CITIES - NABLUS
AND HEBRON - HAVE ANNOUNCED PLANS TO VISIT THE ARAB GULF. EXACT

DESTINATIONS NOT SPECIFIED. A HEBRON DELEGATION, HEADED BY MAYOR FAHD QAWASMI, WILL LEAVE WITHIN A WEEK. THE NABLUS DELEGATION WILL BE HEADED BY MAYOR BASSAM SHAKA'. NO DATE SET FOR ITS DEPARTURE. HALHUL'S MAYOR MUHAMMAD MULHIM DEPARTURE FOR KUWAIT FOR A TWO-WEEK VISIT IS ALSO IMMINENT.

4. AL QUDS REPORTS THAT KING HUSSEIN CHAIRED A MEETING OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES COMMITTEE APRIL 4, BUT DID NOT REPORT DETAILS OF ITS' DECISION. HOWEVER, ISRAELI RADIO REPORTED THAT MEETING AFFIRMED JORDANINA INTEREST IN HELPING WB MUNICIPALITIES IN PRINCIPLE.

5. COMMENT: AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FROM THE OIL STATES MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING FROM TWO SOURCES: FIRST, PRIVATE PALESTINIANS OR PALESTINIAN GROUPS WHO MAINTAIN TIES WITH THEIR NATIVE TOWNS ON THE WEST BANK, AND SECOND, THE GOVERNMENTS (MUNICIPAL OR STATE) OF THE OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES. TRANSFERS FROM THE FORMER HAVE LONG BEEN OF ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE WEST BANK, HOWEVER, IN THE PAST THEY HAVE BEEN MADE TO INDIVIDUALS NOT MUNICIPALITIES. LIKEWISE, THE RULERS IN THE OIL STATES HAVE PREVIOUSLY MADE GRANTS TO CHARITABLE ASSOCIATIONS ON THE WEST BANK, BUT, EXCEPT FOR A GRANT OF ABOUT \$12,000 FROM ABU DHABI'S ZAYYID BIN SULTAN TO JERICHO IN JULY, 1976, NOT TO WEST BANK MUNICIPALITIES. ALTHOUGH PEANUTS TO THE GULF STATES, A GRANT OF SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS IS SIGNIFICANT HERE WHERE IN 1977 HEBRON'S TOTAL MUNICIPAL BUDGET IS ONLY \$1.7 MILLION. IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT THESE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING MADE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF BUT NOT AT THE INITIATIVE OF OR THROUGH CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PLO. NO DOUBT SUWITI'S SUCCESS IN THE GULF COMPARED WITH QAWASMI'S AND FRIEJ'S LACK OF SUCCESS IN AMMAN THUS FAR WILL UNDERMINE GOJ INFLUENCE ESPECIALLY SINCE THE FORMER IS A MORE POLITICALLY PALATABLE SOURCE. IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE NEW FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL INCREASE WEST BANK INDEPENDENCE VIS A VIS THE PLO, MUCH LESS CREATE AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINAIN LEADERSHIP HERE. ON THE CONTRARY, IT WOULD SEEM TO BE A MEANS OF INCREASING THE WEST BANK MUNICIPALITIES' ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE VIS A VIS JORDAN SO THAT THEY CAN GIVE FURTHER EXPRESSION TO PRO-PLO SENTIMENTS. IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHAT THE GOJ WILL REALLY DO ABOUT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO WEST BANK MUNICIPALITIES - WHETHER IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE JUST PROMISES OR ACTUALLY TURN INTO CASE. WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY ISRAELI REACTION TO ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS, MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977JERUSA00498
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770119-1048
Format: TEL
From: JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770483/aaaacugq.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 582354a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2884589
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OIL STATES AID TO WEST BANK MUNICIPALITIES.
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, EAID, IS, JO, KU, TC, SA, XF, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/582354a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009